

DAVID N. MURDOCK



*Dave Murdock
Claimed "Pony Express Rider
H.W.
W.W."*

David N. Murdock, eldest son of Joseph Murdock and Jane Sharp, was born 23, 1855, at "Church Pastures," Salt City, Utah. He rode horses early in herding cows in the foothills, always looking out for Indians, so he could ride and warn the settlers. While in Fillmore around 12 years of age, he was to take the place of a sick Pony Express rider. He rode for three months, receiving full federal pay, and bought his first set of spurs.

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HEBER BIOGRAPHIES

"D. N." was healthy, strong, and a hard worker. His father was the first bishop in the valley. He was called away from home much of the time to assist the saints to get settled, so young David had big responsibilities in early life helping with the family. He earned money and materials working in the timber, logging, road building, and freighting. By exchanging work with other men, he managed to get a two-room house built for his mother, which is still in good condition and is occupied. With authority from President Abram Hatch, he supervised the building of the first fence around our Heber Cemetery. He loved nature. The hills, valleys, mountains, rivers and forests were his education. He had little schooling. He always liked, and owned, good horses and traveled many, many miles on horseback. He knew oxen from "A to Z."

On January 14, 1878, he married Margaret Todd. He built a good two-room frame house with red sandstone walls all around, quarried with oxen from nearby hills. He was proud to bring his bride of a year to their own home, all paid for. Together they enjoyed relatives and friends. Many times strangers, Indians, and even tramps, ate at their table. All were made welcome. He was a good provider, always ready and willing to help anyone in need. Five sons and six daughters were reared here.

He was interested in ranching, range land, cattle, horses, but he never owned sheep. He had wagons, buggies, a bicycle, only one car, and he never cared to travel in an airplane. In later years he enjoyed seeing the big tractors, trucks, steam shovels, plow scrapers, and all the modern-day road work equipment. He also was vitally interested in the big reservoirs and waterways, thinking how much easier it was to build good roads and reservoirs than in his hard-working days with horses, plows, scrapers, wagons and a road crew.

He built the biggest barn in Wasatch County, and got out all the timber with oxen and horses during the winter months. All the logs were hand-hewn. He was an expert with ax, saw and hammer. He loved to work, and enjoyed good health all his days. He also had a healthy family. He enjoyed dancing, and gave several big public dancing parties on his birthdays, hiring

two orchestras to accommodate both old and young.

He spent his eighty-fifth birthday in Los Angeles with his sons. When they asked him what he wanted for a present he said, "A new bicycle." Not many boys his age would want such a gift, but he did, and he rode it to his last days.

Early in December he had a pain. Doctors called it appendicitis and advised an operation. He got along nicely and returned home. However, within a few days complications set in. He was returned to the hospital, where he passed away on December 13, 1951, realizing one of his greatest desires "never to outlive his usefulness."

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